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DOCUMENTS

ON THE ELECTION OF THE FIRST BISHOP OF NEW YORK¹

The City of New York is now the largest civic municipality in the world; while the metropolitan See of which it is the seat, and which bears its name, is one of the foremost Dioceses of the Catholic Church. Possibly, indeed, it is second to none in the number of its practical Catholics. Its Catholicity is of the staunchest kind. For these reasons, as well as on account of its wealth, its high standing, and the civic influence of its members, its history is necessarily of great interest to Catholic historians and readers generally, since it forms no small part of the history of the Church in the United States. Growing, as it has, in so short a period from the insignificant position it occupied in our American Church, when its first Catholic house of prayer was built (1786), to its present colossal magnitude, the foundation stones on which it is reared are of immense historical value. They possess in an eminent degree that special interest which lingers around all successful beginnings. The three documents published here are such cornerstones. They throw a new light, not only on the story of the foundation of the Diocese of New York, but also on the life and virtues of the eminent divine who was appointed the first bishop of the great American metropolis. Although Dr. Concanen never reached New York, on account of the tyranny of Napoleon Bonaparte, his name will ever be intimately and inseparably connected with the name of that Diocese—his history with its history. These documents are now placed for the first time before the general reader. For, although they were published in the *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, January, 1900 (Vol. iv, pp. 442-445), this is a private publication intended for the use of the members of the Dominican Order, and does not come under general observation. It is the first time they have been put in English dress. Thus they will place much interesting, valuable, and instructive history at the disposal both of those versed in the language of the Church and of those who know only the English Tongue.

I

The Brief "Apostolatus Officium," Appointing Rev. Richard L. Concanen, O.P., First Bishop of New York

(Copy)

The original of this Brief is probably in the Roman Chancellery. The copy published below is in the Archives of Propaganda (*Scritture riferite nei Congressi. Dal Canada all' Ismo di Panama, dal 1791 a tutto il 1817*, Vol. iii, fol. 306-307). It bears no signature; and the number of "etc." it contains, shows that it does not give the entire document. The omissions, however, as in all such copies,

¹ These documents form as it were the *pièces justificatives* of Father O'Daniel's articles on Bishop Concanen (V. CHR., Vol. i, pp. 400-142; Vol. ii, pp. 19-47), and are printed in this issue for the convenience of our readers.

do not touch the substance of the document; but are merely of those ornamental clauses, which vary somewhat under different Popes, and which are inserted in all papal letters solely to round them out and to give them tone. This copy of the *Apostolatus Officium*, therefore, because made by the Propaganda itself and preserved in its Archives for ready reference, has all the historical value of the source from which it was taken. Because of their great number, the Briefs and Bulls of episcopal and archiepiscopal appointments are not, ordinarily at least, published in the general *Bullaria*. For this reason, the Brief making Bishop Carroll an Archbishop and those appointing Fathers Cheverus, Concanen, Egan and Flaget Bishops respectively of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown, have found no place in any *Bullaria* yet published. The end of the present document *Apostolatus Officium*, where a number of omissions are indicated by "etc.," might, with a very few slight verbal changes, be filled out to its original state from the Brief *Ex Debito Pastoralis Officii* erecting the Sees of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown. (*Bullarii Romani Continuatio*, Vol. xi, pp. 1062-1063. Prato, 1850.) The *Apostolatus Officium* is published, with a few typographical errors, in the Dominican *Analecta*, ut supra, pp. 442-43.

*Dilecto filio Richardo Lucae Concanen Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum electo
Neo-Eboracensi. Pius PP. VII*

Salutem et Apostolicam benedictionem

Dilecte fili. Apostolatus officium, meritis licet imparibus, Nobis ex alto commissum etc. gubernare. Quum itaque ob rationes et causas in aliis Apostolicis Nostris in simili forma Brevis hodie expeditis Litteris satis expressas,² Neo Eboraci, quae in Americae provinciis foederatis consistit, unam erexerimus Episcopalem Sedem cum suae dioecesis districtu, et cum subjectione quoad metropoliticum jus Ecclesiae Baltimorensi in Archiepiscopalem et Metropolitanam per Nos constitutae, prout iisdem in Litteris, quarum etc., uberius continetur; quumque de praeficiendo ejusmodi Sedi personam utilem ac fructuosam cum ven. fratribus Nostris S. Romanae Ecclesiae Cardinalibus Congregationi de Propaganda Fide praepositis deliberationem habuerimus diligentem, statim ad Te, qui de legitimo matrimonio procreatus, et Ordine Fratrum Praedicatorum expresse professus, et in sacro presbyteratus ordine ac aetate canonica es constitutus, et de cujus vitae munditia, morum honestate, prudentia, doctrina ac praesertim Catholicae Fidei zelo luculenta apud Nos perhibentur testimonia, direximus oculos mentis Nostrae, Teque propterea a quibusvis etc.

² The words *hodie expeditis Litteris* do not mean here letters *despatched* or *forwarded* this day, but letters *written* or *prepared* this day. All the documents written at this time regarding the American Church were placed in the hands of the Bishop-elect of New York that he might bring them with him to Archbishop Carroll. Dr. Concanen was still in Rome, and all American ships in Italian ports had been sequestered by the French government. But these same words, *in aliis Apostolicis Nostris in simili forma Brevis hodie expeditis Litteris*, show conclusively that the Propaganda copy of the *Apostolatus Officium* appointing Father Concanen Bishop of New York is misdated. It is dated September 8, 1808. But the other Briefs to which it refers, and which it expressly says were prepared on the same day, bear the date, in all *Bullaria*, of April 8, 1808. This, then, must also be the correct date of our present document. For the correct date of the *Pontificii Muneris* raising Baltimore to the rank of an Archbishopric, and the *Ex Debito Pastoralis Officii* erecting Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown, Ky., into episcopal Sees (the two Briefs referred to in this document) see *Bullarii Romani Continuatio*, Vol. xi, pp. 1062-1063. Some Propaganda copies of the *Pontificii Muneris* and the *Ex Debito Pastoralis Officii* have them also incorrectly dated September 8, for April 8, 1808.

censentes, eandem Neo Eboraci Sedem Episcopalem de persona tua Nobis ac memoratis Cardinalibus ob tuorum exigentiam meritorum accepta, de ipsorum fratrum consilio, auctoritate Apostolica tenore praesentium providemus, illique Te praeficimus in episcopum et pastorem; curam, regimen et administrationem Tibi ejusdem Sedis Neo-Eboracensis plenarie committendo; facultatemque etiam, cujus vigore consecrationis munus a quocumque Catholico antistite gratiam et communionem Sedis Apostolicae habente, accitis et in hoc sibi assistantibus duobus aliis episcopis, vel si commodere reperiri nequiverint, duobus eorum loco presbetyris secularibus vel regularibus eandem gratiam et communionem habentibus, praestito tamen prius per Te in ejus manibus juxta pontificale Romanum juramento solito, Tu suscipere, ille vero nonnisi postquam a Te hujusmodi juramentum acceperit, idem munus Tibi impendere, respective possitis et valeatis adjicimus atque attribuimus. Jugum igitur Domini, quod, eo inspirante, Tibi Nos hodie imponimus, prompta suscipe devotione et Neo Eboraci Ecclesiam, quam Tibi Ipsi tradimus administrandam, eo studio gubernata ut iste grex Christi, qui animam suam pro ovibus posuit, se pastori provide et administratori fructuoso commissum esse laetetur. Quapropter in civitate Neo-Eboracensi unam ecclesiam ad formam Cathedralis quam citius poteris erigi facito, et prout temporum rerumque permiserit ratio, aliquem Tibi clerum divino cultui Ecclesiaeque ejusdem servitio addictum instituto, nec non dioecesanum clericorum seminarium vel eadem in civitate vel alibi, ubi satius expedire censueris, erigito in ecclesiasticis proventibus; magis quae Dei, quam quae tui sunt, quaerito, curamque in illis diligentem adhibito, demum praeter ea quae in praedictis litteris ut a Neo Eboraci episcopis fieri possent indulsimus ac disposuimus, Tu quaecumque alia, quia incremento Catholicae Fidei, utilitati gregis et ecclesiae cultui ac decori profutura in Domino duxeris, libere agito: salva tamen semper in praemissis S. Sedis Nostrae et Congregationis praedictae auctoritate. Hinc his, quae desuper tuo commendavimus zelo illud nunc addimus ac expresse Tibi mandamus ut ejusdem Congregationis jussis obedientiam praestes, relationem visitationis Ecclesiae tuae tempore debito ad eam transmittas, eamque de omnibus diligenter reddas instructam, quae gregis Tibi commissi et Catholicae istarum partium religionis interesse posse cognoveris. Decernentes easdem praesentes Litteras firmas etc. obtinere ac tibi plenissime suffragari, et ab omnibus inviolabiliter observari, sicque etc. judicari etc. attentari. Non obstantibus Apostolicis etc. constitutionibus et ordinibus caeterisque etiam speciali ac expressa mentione seu derogatione dignis, contrariis quibuscumque etc. Datum apud S. Mariam Majorem 8 septembris [aprilis] 1808 Pontificatus Nostri anno nono.

(Translation)

To Our Beloved Son, Richard Luke Concanen of the Order of Preachers and Bishop-elect of New York, Pius VII

Health and Apostolic Benediction

Beloved Son:

The Apostolic Office, in spite of Our unworthiness, has been entrusted to Us from on high, etc., to rule. Since, therefore, for reasons and causes sufficiently expressed in Our other Letters Apostolic prepared this day, also in the form of a Brief, we have

erected an Episcopal See in New York, United States of America, with its diocesan territory, and subject, in regard to metropolitan rights, to the Church of Baltimore which We have raised to the rank of an Archiepiscopal and Metropolitan See, as is more fully declared in the same Letters, in which (*quarum* etc.); and since, when We held an earnest consultation with Our venerable brothers, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church in charge of the Sacred Congregation de Propagande Fide, to select a zealous and efficient person to appoint to the said Diocese of New York, We at once turned our eyes upon you, who, born in lawful wedlock, are duly professed in the Order of Friars Preacher, ordained priest and of canonical age,—and of whose purity of life, integrity of morals, prudence, learning and especially zeal for the Catholic Faith We have abundant and splendid evidence: wherefore, with the counsel of Our brothers, the aforesaid cardinals, to whom as to Ourselves, you are acceptable because of your shining merits, first absolving you from all censures, etc., We provide for the See of New York, and by Apostolic authority and these Letters patent appoint you its Bishop and Pastor and give you full charge, government and administration of that Diocese. Furthermore, We authorize and empower your Lordship to receive Episcopal consecration from any Catholic Bishop in favor and communion with the Apostolic See, assisted by two other bishops, or, if these cannot be conveniently had, by two priests, either secular or regular, in their stead, provided they are in the same favor and communion,—you having first taken before him the usual oath contained in the Roman Pontifical; for he can perform that sacred function for you only after he has received said oath from you. Accept, then, with prompt obedience the yoke of the Lord which, under His inspiration, We impose upon you to-day, and so govern the Diocese of New York, which We have entrusted to your charge, that this flock of Christ (who gave His life for His sheep) may rejoice to have been committed to a faithful pastor and wise administrator. You will, therefore, erect a Cathedral Church in the city of New York, as soon as you can; associate with yourself, as time and circumstances permit, a body of clergy for divine worship and the service of said Church; build with the ecclesiastical revenues a diocesan seminary for the education of clerics, either in the same city or elsewhere, as your Lordship may deem it most expedient; seek rather the things of God than your own, and keep a diligent care over them. Finally, besides those things which by Our permission and indulgence as per aforesaid letters, may be done by the Bishops of New York, your Lordship may freely do whatever else you may judge in the Lord will aid the increase of the Catholic Faith, the good of the fold, or the religious worship and decorum of the Church—always, however, with the understanding that the authority of the Holy See and of the said Sacred Congregation in the above matters shall remain intact. Hence to those things which We have already commended to your zeal, We now add this: We expressly command that your Lordship obey the decrees of the same Congregation, that you send it in due time an account of a visitation of your Diocese, and that you diligently keep it informed on all that you know to be for the good of the flock entrusted to your charge and for that of the Catholic religion in those parts. We decree that these Our Letters shall ever remain in force, etc., obtain, and uphold your Lordship's authority in the fullest sense; that they shall be held inviolable by all; and that they must be adjudged etc. as such; [that, should they] be attacked, [all such attempts shall be null and void]. Notwithstanding the Apostolical etc. [i. e., and other] constitutions and decrees, as all things else whatsoever to the contrary, even if they deserve special and express mention or derogation. Given at Rome at Saint Mary Major, the eight day of September [April], 1808, in the ninth year of Our Pontificate.

II

Letter of Propaganda to Archbishop Carroll, May 21, 1808

(Copy)

This document is a letter of Propaganda to the proto-Bishop and Archbishop of the United States, the original of which the writer did not succeed in discovering in the Archives of Propaganda, although he searched carefully for it. Perhaps, however, these efforts might have been crowned with success if he had had more time at his disposal. It is no easy matter to find documents in those Archives; much time, labor and perseverance are required. The letter sent to Dr. Carroll does not seem to have reached its destination. The copy published here is in *America Centrale*, Vol. iii, fol. 306-307. The copy itself does not bear the name of the addressee; neither is it signed. But it is prefaced by a note in Italian, which gives the date of the original and tells us to whom it was written. Should, indeed, the original no longer exist, the value of this copy is thereby enhanced. It was made by Propaganda itself, and is preserved in its Archives for its own use. As it certainly gives the full substance of the original, it has practically the same historical authenticity. The three Dioceses, besides that of New York, which were established at this time (April 8, 1808) were those of Boston, Philadelphia and Bardstown, Ky.; while the Ordinaries appointed over them were Bishops Cheverus, Egan and Flaget. On the same occasion Baltimore was made an Archiepiscopal See and Bishop Carroll raised to the dignity of metropolitan. This document shows very clearly the reason of Father Concanen's appointment to the diocese of New York. It also shows the great esteem in which that distinguished ecclesiastic and the venerable metropolitan of Baltimore were held at Rome, and the confidence that was reposed in both of them by the rulers of the Church. It confirms the testimony found in more than one of Doctor Concanen's letters of the reputation for zeal and wisdom that Archbishop Carroll enjoyed at the center of Christendom. This high regard the Archbishop, in spite of the contrary assertion one reads here and there, seems to have retained until his death. There is only one instance where a clergyman was proposed by him for a bishopric and did not receive the appointment. This was the case of the Rev. John B. David, who was recommended by him for the Diocese of Philadelphia. But David's appointment was prevented by his own expostulation, coupled with the earnest protest of Bishop Flaget, who was in dire need of his services at the Seminary of Kentucky. For the English translation of this document the reader is referred to the article: *Concanen's Election to the See of New York*, pages 22-23, of this number of the CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW. It is published in the original Italian and Latin in the Dominican *Analecta, ut supra* (Vol. iv, p. 443).

"Quando nel 1808 fu inalzata la chiesa di Baltimora alla dignità metropolitana, e le furono fatti quattro nuovi vescovi suffraganei, così scrisse la Sacra Congregazione a quel nuovo Arcivescovo sotto il dì 24 maggio, 1808: Quantum pietati, ac prudentiae Amplitudinis Tuae fidat, deferatque Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Papa Pius VII, et Sacra haec Congregatio de Propaganda Fide effectus ipse demonstrat, rerumque mox gestarum series, quam Apostolica scripta, seu Brevia his literis adnexa

abundius Tibi declarabunt. Videbis siquidem Tuis votis, precibusque novas quatuor Sedes in istis Foederatis Provinciis, ac dioeceses constitutas, auctum Te metropolitico jure, ac dignitate, electosque in antistites novarum ecclesiarum tres ecclesiasticos viros illos, quos in Tuis literis summis laudibus commendasti. Quia vero Ecclesiae Neo-Eboracensi neminem, quem praeponeremus, commendasti, virum elegit Santissimus Dominus Noster, quem longa experientia, et opinio ipsa totius Urbis tantae dignitatis dignissimum probat, quemque Tu ipse carissimum Tibi tam frequenti argumento probasti, Richardum nempe Lucam Concanen Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum professorem, ac theologum Casanatensem."

III

Letters Patent [of the Most Rev. Pius J. Gaddi], May 10, 1808, to Bishop Concanen Appointing him Vicar General of the Dominican Order over all the New World³

(Archives of the Dominican Master General, *Regesta Magistri Generalis Rmi Josephi Gaddi, Codex IV, 260, p. 5*)

This last paper is truly an extraordinary document. Not only is it opposed to the ordinary *modus operandi* common to all religious Orders, but it almost does violence to the very spirit of their rules. Indeed, these letters patent of

³ Immediately preceding these letters patent in the Archives of the Father General—and on the same folio—is found this note of Father Gaddi testifying that he had received papal authorization to confer such singular powers on the first Bishop of New York:

Die 10 maii, 1808.—Quum die 8 maii, 1808, Reverendissimus Magister Ordinis, supplex factus Sanctissimo Domino Pius Pio VII., vivae vocis oraculum habuerit ad delegandam omnem suam Ordinariam et Apostolicam potestatem Reverendissimo et Illustrissimo P. Fr. Ricardo Lucae Concanen Episcopo Neo-Eboracensi pro universae Americae Fratribus praesentibus futurisque, Sororibus, Tertiariis, Confraternitatibus, etc., volueritque Sanctissimus Dominus ut annis singulis de actis per hanc commissionem idem D. Episcopus notitiam Magistro Ordinis exhibeat, idem Reverendissimus hac die 10 maii patentibus suis Literis juxta formam adjunctam instituit dictum Episcopum sui et Successorum Vicarium, etiam pro Provinciis et Congregationibus Hispano nunc et Lusitano dominio subjectis, si harum tamen Praesides et Fratres impediuntur communicare cum legitimo Supremo Moderatore, vel si res moram non patiatur; commisit etiam plenam liberamque potestatem pro Insulis Antillis et Lucais, cum quibus nulla ab immemorabili fuit nobiscum communicatio: Praeceptumque fuit, Apostolica auctoritate, omnibus curae Magistri Ordinis subjectis aut subjiendis, ut ipsimet Episcopo in praefatis locorum spatiis obediant tanquam Vicario Supremi Moderatoris, idque vita et episcopatu ejusdem durantibus, quod ex speciali factum est Apostolica facultate.

(Translation)

May the tenth, 1808.—On the eighth day of May, 1808, the Most Rev. Master General of the Order, prostrate at the feet of His Holiness, Pius VII., obtained oral permission (*vivae vocis oraculum habuerit ad*) to delegate all his authority, both ordinary and extraordinary, to the Right Rev. Richard Luke Concanen, Bishop of New York, over the Brethren, present and future, Sisters, Tertiaries, Confraternities, etc., in all America. But the Holy Father wished that the said Bishop should send the General of the Order each year an account of all his acts done in virtue of this commission. Accordingly, the same Most Rev. Father General, on this tenth day of May, by his Letters patent, in accordance with the copy here annexed, instituted the aforesaid Bishop his Vicar and that of his successors, even over those Provinces and Congregations that are in places now subject to the Spanish and Portuguese dominions; provided, however, the Superiors and Brethren of those Provinces and Congregations are unable to communicate with the Order's lawful Supreme Head, or if the matter does not admit of delay. Furthermore, the General bestowed upon his Vicar full and unrestricted powers over the Antilles and Bahama Islands with which he has had no communication for time out of mind. All persons who are now subject, or who in time to come will be subject, to the jurisdiction of the Father General were commanded, in virtue of Apostolic authority, to obey the Bishop during his lifetime and episcopacy as the Vicar of the Supreme Head of the Order;—all which has been done by special powers delegated by the Holy See."

Father Gaddi to Bishop Concanen, as far as the writer has been able to ascertain, have not (in the broad powers conferred, in the extent of territory covered, etc.) a parallel in the 700 years of Dominican history. Two things led to this singular action of Father Gaddi. The one was the gloomy political horizon of Europe at the time, and the depressing state of uncertainty then prevailing at Rome in regard to the future of religion. The other was Bishop Concanen's proved zeal, wisdom and prudence. On February 2, 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte's sincerity in the faith he professed was manifested by the entrance of one of his armies into Rome, and his love for the Head of the Church to which he belonged attested by their planting their cannon in the *Piazza de Quattro Cavalli* and training them on the palace of the Quirinal, then the residence of the Popes. Many of the Cardinals were at once sent into exile, Pius VII was made a virtual prisoner, and his communication with the Christian world severed. All manner of evils were imminent; nor could it be foreseen how soon they might come. The lot of his predecessor—exile and imprisonment—loomed up ominously before the Sovereign Pontiff. The Fathers General of the religious Orders were threatened with similar misfortunes. It was in these straits that Father Gaddi, to safeguard the welfare of his Order in the New World, turned his eyes upon Dr. Concanen, whose years as one of the Assistants to successive Generals had not only imbued him with its spirit, both apostolic and contemplative, but had given him a thorough knowledge of the character of its government, and whose sterling worth and good judgment singled him out as one specially fitted for a position at once so important and so delicate. But now that Concanen was a Bishop and no longer under the Order's jurisdiction, the General could neither licitly nor validly delegate his former Assistant any power over the members or the affairs of the Order. For this special papal authorization was required. To obtain such authorization Father Gaddi obtained a private audience with Pius VII. The Pope's fears were for the worst. This, coupled with his anxiety for the good of religion, his intimate knowledge of Concanen's worth and zeal, and the close relations that existed between the two great men—we may readily believe—disposed the sad Pontiff readily to grant even so singular a request in favor of his esteemed friend. As no one could enter or leave the Quirinal without being searched by the hostile invaders, the permission sought was granted Father Gaddi orally (*vivæ vocis oraculo*) rather than in writing, that thus it might not come to the knowledge of the enemy. These letters patent to Bishop Concanen were one of Father Gaddi's last official acts. Early in August he was notified by the French authorities that he must quit Rome within forty-eight hours. At two o'clock on Sunday morning, the thirteenth day of the same month, he and the Fathers General of the Theatines, the Barnabites and the Clerks Minor, after they had assisted at Mass celebrated by special permission shortly after midnight in his (Gaddi's) private chapel, left the Eternal City under military escort for the Alpine frontiers. Gaddi was then taken on to Auxerre, France, whence he was not permitted to return to Rome until after the downfall of Bonaparte in the spring of 1814.

Illustrissimo et Reverendissimo in Christo Patri Domino Fr. Ricardo Lucae Concanen Ordinis Praedicatorum, S. Theologiae Doctori, Proto-Episcopo Neo-Eboracensi in Foederatis Americae Provinciis, Fr. Pius Joseph Gaddi, S. Theologiae Professor ac dicti Ordinis humilis Magister Generalis, et servus, salutem et apostolicam messis abundantiam.

Cooperantem Nobiscum hactenus in Dominicani Gregis custodia, Sociumque laboris, et participem tribulationum, quae invenerunt, Nos nimis quem Scotiae etiam Provincialis titulo auctum prudente zelo flagrantem novimus in Ordinis dilatione, et Provinciae Nostrae Sancti Joseph in praememoratis Americae Provinciis erectione promovenda, nunc vero a SS. Domino Nostro Pio Papa VII., imo ab ipso Spiritu Sancto positum novam regere Ecclesiam, quam sibi Christus Dominus acquisivit in locis praedictis, jure confidimus abundantiori in eundem Ordinem, dictamque Sancti Patriarchae Joseph Provinciam dilectione et solitudine donandum in utilitatem Ecclesiae, et sacri dicti Ordinis decorem, quem Sanctissimus Pater Noster Dominicus constituit et plantavit in Episcoporum praesertim subsidium et gratiam. Rogamus propterea, et quasi paterno veteri affectu hortamur Te Illustrissimum et Reverendissimum Dominum Fr. Ricardum Lucam Neo-Eboracensem Episcopum praesalutatum, ut in Dioecesi Tua Neo-Eboracensi aliisque finitimis, in insulis quoque Antillis et Lucais dictis, imo in universo novo Orbe, Vicariam assumens potestatem Nostram, quam tuae Amplitudini plene committimus tenore praesentium, habito prius verbo cum SS. D. N. Pio VII., ejusdemque favente Beneplacito, circa Fratres, Sorores, et utriusque sexus personas Tertii Ordinis, nec non circa Provincias, Conventus, Monasteria, Collegiaque erecta aut erigenda, atque circa receptiones et professiones praedictorum, Clericorumque nostrorum Ordinationes, et ad Confessiones Praedicationemque approbationes, tum circa Confraternitates SS. Nominis Dei, Sacratissimi Rosarii B. M. V., et Militiae Angelicae, sive Cinguli S. Thomae Aquinatis, et quoad Scholasticos gradus et honores, praesertim vero in iis, quae moram non patiuntur, et occurrente casu, quo Provinciarum et Congregationumstrarum in America Septentrionali, Meridionali, et Orientali, insulisque adjunctis, Praelati et Fratres communicationem legitimam cum Generali Moderatore habere non valeant, ea omnia praestes et exequaris, quae Nos ipsi, auctoritate Ordinaria vel Apostolica, etiam peculiari rescripto Nobis benigne commissa, agere et praestare possumus, quaeque, sicuti ex praehabito Socii Nostri munere didicisti, ageremus, si praesentes in locis praejudicatis essemus, tam jubendo, corrigendo, visitando, puniendo quam dispensando, instituendo, confirmando, absolvendo, delegando; quorum tamen actorum annis singulis a Te notitiam habeamus oportet. Praecipimus autem Nostra et Sanctae Sedis potestate Nobis, et supra commissa, in virtute Spiritus Sancti et Sanctae Obedientiae, sub formali praecepto, omnibus et singulis curae Nostrae in praedictis locorum spatiis utcumque subjectis, aut subjiciendis, ut Tibi, tanquam Nobis, debitam in omnibus reverentiam et obedientiam praestent, et quamdiu Episcopatum et vitam Tibi Deus dederit quam longevam felicemque precamur, Te Vicarium Moderatoris Ordinis habeant et agnoscant. In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen. Contrariis quibuscumque non obstantibus. In quorum fidem his majori sigillo munitis manu propria subscripsimus.—Romae apud Sanctam Mariam super Minervam, die 10 maii MDCCCVIII.—Fr. Josephus Gaddi Magister Ordinis Apostolicus ad Praemissa Delegatus.—Fr. Pius Antonius Molineri Mag. Prior Provincialis Daciae et Socius.

(Translation)

To the Right Rev. Father in Christ, Richard Luke Concanen of the Order of Preachers, Doctor in Sacred Theology and first Bishop of New York, United States of America, Father Pius Joseph Gaddi, Professor of Sacred Theology, Master General and humble servant of the same Order, health and a fruitful harvest of souls.

As a cooperator with Us until now in governing the Order of Saint Dominic, a companion in labor, a sharer in the tribulations that have come upon Us, and honored with the title of Provincial of Scotland, We have had striking proofs that your Lordship is aflame with prudent zeal for the spread of the Order and for fostering the growth of Our Province of Saint Joseph in the aforesaid United States of America. Now, therefore, that you have been chosen by His Holiness, Pius VII., nay, by the Holy Ghost Himself, to govern a Diocese which Christ Our Lord has gathered unto Himself in those parts, We confidently trust your Lordship will be endowed with a still more abounding love and solicitude for the same Order and the said Province of the Holy Patriarch, Saint Joseph; for the good of the Church and the honor of the Order which Our Holy Father, Saint Dominic, founded and built up in an especial manner to aid and subserve Bishops. We ask, therefore; nay, We beseech you, Right Rev. Bishop Concanen, in virtue as it were of Our long paternal affection, to accept in your Diocese of New York and in the other neighboring Bishoprics, as also in the Antilles and Bahama Islands,—indeed, in the whole New World, the position of Our Vicar which We bestow upon your Lordship with all its powers by these Letters patent. Having first had an audience with His Holiness, Pius VII., and obtained his kindly consent thereto, We confer upon your Lordship (for the aforesaid places) vicarious powers over all Our Brethren, Sisters, and persons belonging to the Third Order;⁴ over all Provinces, Convents, Monasteries and Colleges, whether already erected or to be established in the future; in regard to the reception and profession of persons in the Order, the ordination of Our clerics, and their approval for hearing confessions and preaching; as also in regard to the Confraternities of the Most Holy Name of God, the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Angelic Warfare or the Girdle of Saint Thomas of Aquin, and in regard to conferring scholastic degrees and honors. In those matters especially which will not admit of delay, and in cases where the Superiors and Brethren of Our Provinces in North, South and Eastern America, and adjacent islands, are unable to hold lawful communication with the Order's Master General, your Lordship is prayed to enact and execute whatsoever We Ourselves can enact and execute by Our authority, whether ordinary or extraordinary, even by that bestowed upon Us by special rescript, and which you know from your former position as Our assistant We should do, were We present in the aforesaid places. To this end your Lordship may not only resort to commands, corrections, visits and punishments, but also grant dispensations, appoint, confirm or remove Superiors, and delegate your authority. It is necessary, however, that We receive each year on account of all such acts done by your Lordship. Furthermore, in virtue of Our authority and that, as has

⁴ At the time of the writing of this document the Father General had far more authority than he has today over the Dominican Sisterhoods and what is known as the Third Order of St. Dominic composed of people of both sexes living in the world. Now, in fact, he has no authority over them, apart from being able to insist on certain conditions as necessary for the affiliation of these two great branches of the Order with the main stem. Two things also occur here in which the Latin tongue is at variance with our prevalent English usage. Convents (Conventus), as used in this document, signify houses for religious men, while Monasteries (Monasteria) designate houses of like character for religious women or Sisters. The word Colleges (Collegia) includes both *studia*, or houses of study for students of the Dominican Order, and educational institutions generally conducted by its members.

been said, given Us by the Holy See, We command in the name of the Holy Ghost, under holy obedience and formal precept each and every one now in any way subject, or who will hereafter be subject, to Our jurisdiction in the above mentioned countries to show your Lordship in all things that reverence and obedience which are due Us; to hold and acknowledge you as the Vicar of the Order's General as long as God grants you Episcopal dignity and life, which We pray may be long and happy. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen. All things to the contrary notwithstanding. In testimony of which We sign with Our own hand these Letters patent secured by Our major seal. Given at Rome in the Convent of Saint Mary of the Minerva, on the tenth day of May, 1808.—Father Joseph Gaddi, Master General of the Order and Delegate Apostolic for the above matters.—Father Pius Anthony Molineri, Master in Sacred Theology, Prior Provincial of Dacia⁵ and Assistant.”

⁵ Four of the assistants to the Dominican Father General ordinarily have the honor of titular provincial for the four extinct provinces of Scotland, Greece, the Holy Land and Dacia. Father Concanen had this title for Scotland, and Father Molineri, whose name appears at the end of this document, for ancient Dacia.